

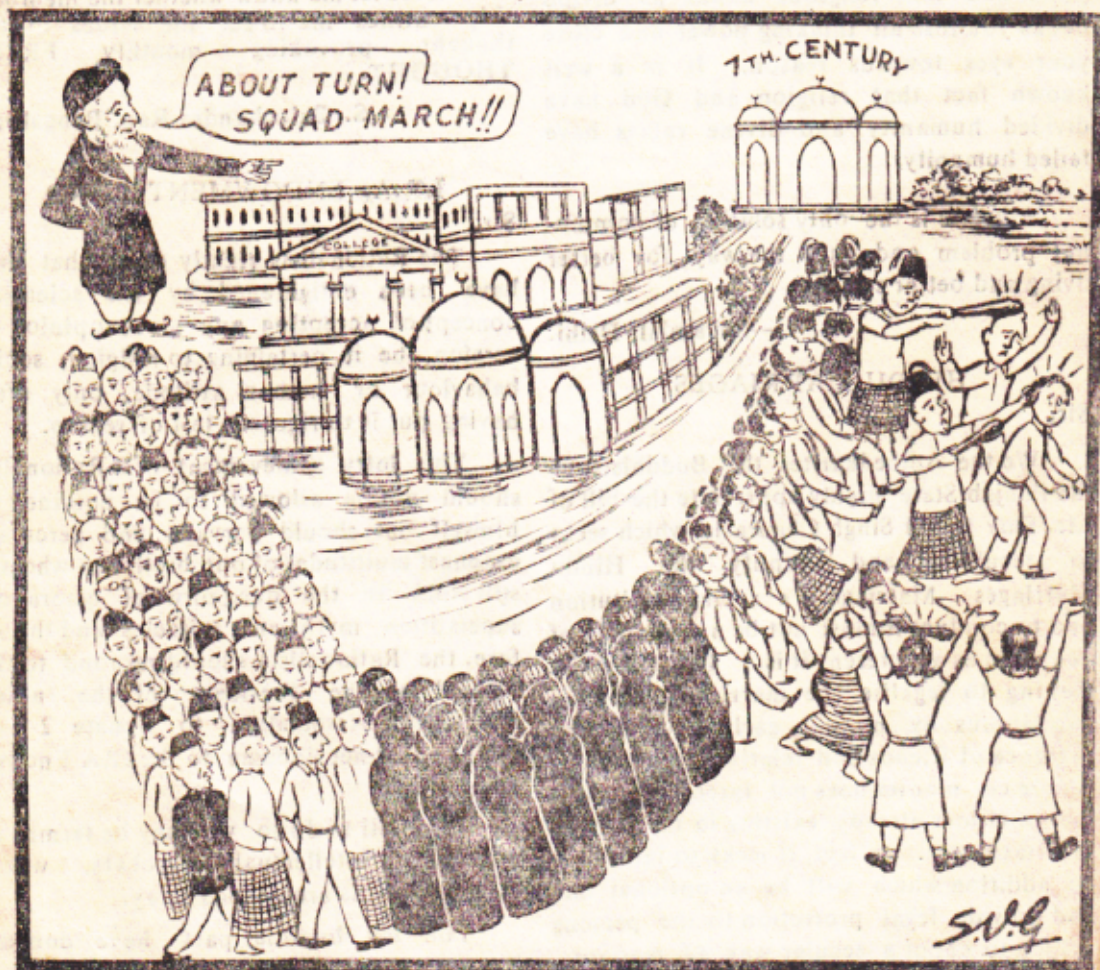
FreeThought

The Largest Circulated Rationalist Monthly

ISLAM SPECIAL NUMBER

July, 1979.

80 Paise



Khomeini's Islamic Revolution!

(See Page 214)

Vol. IX No 7

Annual Subscription Rs. 9/-

REASON THINKS; RELIGION DREAMS.

Letters . . .

ATHEISM IS THE ONLY SOLUTION

Sir,

Since long we have been talking of secularism, unity of religions, respect for all religions to solve the communal problems. But nothing has been achieved and more we talk of religious unity more the religious hatred spreads.

When you believe in some sort of supreme power and take religious books as divine books you lose all thinking power and close your eyes towards reason. It is a well known fact that religion and God have divided humanity and divine values have failed humanity.

Atheism is the only solution of communal problem and pave the way for better living and better society.

—Shyamlal, Delhi.

HINDU MARRIAGES

Sir,

We the Ambedkarites the Buddhists of the Punjab State highly appreciate the bill of Mr. Shiv Dayal Singh Chaurasia which seeks to secularise and simplify the Hindu Marriages. Marriage is a social institution and to conduct it must not be a monopoly of one caste as at present it is. The bill while seeking to legalise the marriages between two Hindus by mutual garlanding in the presence of friends and relatives or at similar simple ceremonies does not intend to cancel the provisions already existing in the Hindu Marriages Act. In fact, it seeks to introduce an addition which will be an optional one and provide legal protection to the persons willing to adopt a secular way of marriage. We earnestly want this bill passed, as it is a badly needed and overdue thing. The Tamilnadu legislature has already passed such a bill.

It is hoped that the Government will take a realistic view of the aspirations of modern India and will side with the progressive, rational and humanistic bills of this kind.

—Surendra Ajaat, Banga.

FREETHOUGHT

Sir,

I am interested in becoming a member of IRA since I am greatly impressed by the activities undertaken by it for popularising Rationalist movement.

Please let me know whether the membership entitles me to get the issues of the thought provoking monthly FREE-THOUGHT.

— S. Balachandra Rao, Bangalore.

I.R.A. ENDOWMENT FUND

Sir,

The Rationalists rightly assert that they have been enlightened by the scientific concept of accepting any view, opinion or version, be it pertaining to religion, social behaviour or human attitude, only after having put it to rigorous test of reason.

This lofty achievement of a Rationalist should not be allowed to be confined to himself but should pervade and percolate amongst multitudes of our brethren who are still stuck in the quagmire of ignorance, superstition, myths and miracles and therefore, the Rationalists should respond to the Appeal of the President of the Indian Rationalist Association to donate 2 % of their annual net income to the IRA Endowment Fund.

If we fail to do so we may be termed as arm-chair intellectual acrobats, whose eloquent words are washed away.

On my humble part have donated Rs. 200 to IRA Endowment Fund and very earnestly entreat other fellow rationalists to rush their donations to I.R.A.

—M. K. Samant,
Vice President, B.R.A., Bombay.

"The Miracle of Islam was that it destroyed idolatry, and the tragedy of Muslim has been that they rendered religion into the form of an idol."

—Field Marshall Mohammad Ayub Khan,
Bangladesh

CONTENTS

Survival of Islam (Editorial)	195
Readers' Forum	196
News and Notes	197
The Religious tour of Bohra High priest	202
Ahmadis vs Unscientific Theories —S V Vasundhara	203
Critical Study of Islam—Y. A. Lokhandwala and A. Engineer	211
Tenets of Islam Twisted	214
Book Review	216
Bismillah—F. Alladin	219
Children's Corner—On Gods and Godmen—Master Yash Y. Lokhandwala	220
Test for Reason	221

Cover Page Cartoon

— Mr. S. V. Ganesan



Published by

Indian Rationalist
Association

28/ 8, Pantheon Rd,
Madras 600 008

Editor,

C. A. SESHADRI

Freethought

SURVIVAL OF ISLAM

Seven hundred million Muslims of the world today face on acute conflict between ideas evolved in seventh century and conditions prevailing in twentieth century, between religion and tradition on the one hand and science and technology on the other.

Overthrow of outmoded Sheikhs and Shahs by military and or religious dictators has not quickened the process of modernisation and democratisation. Libya, Pakistan and Iran shine as models of obscurantism of the second kind while Saudi Arabia, Morocco and other Sheikdoms continue to groan under the worst atrocities. With oil money at their command, the Middle-East regimes dictate to other Muslim countries to ensure that outmoded Islamic tenets are enforced in the latter as well.

Muslims of India and abroad! People cannot be deceived by Islam. Hinduism or any other religion. Muslim women (over 300 m. of them) cannot be treated as chattels, subordinated and humiliated. Through fear and revivalism, illegitimate Governments cannot subject enlightened individuals to cruelty and conformism in the name of Quoranic law.

The game of Hindu and Muslim reactionary forces (accusing each other of extremism only to retain their hold on our country) is despicable. It is noteworthy that extremists amongst Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs alike supported and continue to support jointly the present Jan ta Government. (If they genuinely fear each other, they should be in opposing camps). This in itself shows that the so-called enmity between religious groups is only a cover to whip up religious feelings and keep their supporters tense in ignorance.

The real enemy of any religion is not another religion, but enlightenment (awareness of one's rights and interests and rationalism. Islam will have a lease of life only so long as the suppressed people are not able to overthrow the ruling cliques. △

Readers' Forum

(The following letter from a 18 year old young Man from Dacca, Bangladesh, speaks for itself of how difficult it is for a boy born in a Muslim family to turn Rationalist. Kudos to young and brave Master Shafiqur Rahman.)

I had been suffering from fever of a serious type. So I was too prostrated to answer your epistle. Unfortunately I had to suffer for a long period. My neighbours spread rumour that as I do not believe in revelation, prophethood, prayer, miracle, and supernatural elements, Allah had punished me with these diseases. They also say that as I do not recite the Quranic hymns before my mother's grave and as I also do not pay the mullahs for praying Allah for my deceased mother's salvation, her soul casts evil upon me causing my severe illness. Not only the neighbours but also my father as well believes in supernatural beings. As I believe in free thought and in the rationalistic way of life, my father did not call in any doctor. He has also seized my pocket money and he pays not single paisa to purchase my dresses etc needed by me.

My grandfather who once loved me dearly, dislikes me. My article "The chracter of God" published in FREE-THOUGHT (January 1978) has been the sole

cause. My statement "Allah is the greatest Satan" hurt his religious sentiments since he also believes in Allah, prophethood and revelation. However, he is a rationalist in some degree. In my childhood, I never went out of home in the evenings and nights for fear of ghosts, jinns etc. I have passed many nights sleeplessly. It was my grandfather who told me that there was no ghost, jinn nor any evil spirit.

Once my aunt was ill. It was believed by the whole village that she was possessed by a ghost. Many exorcists, sazes, babas, fakirs, maulvis were called in to treat her. Some suggested to exorcise, some prescribed severe physical torture, some suggested to put on divine amulets, some prescribed powdered pepper to be used in the eyes, some advised the Quran to be read by four persons to her and yet some others asked to feed the mullah and fakir guests. It was only my grandfather who accepted none of the above directions. He said that all evil spirits were imaginary only to be found in the fairy tales told by our forefathers. She had been suffering from some diseases-hysteria, blood pressure, catalepsy and the like or she was sexually dissatisfied.

My grandfather also tells me that we hear about greatmen like Jesus, Buddha, Mohammad, Krishna are not all true. Historians and disciples of each great man describe their respective teachers' life stories with exaggeration and fabricated incidents. I would be very glad if I can join your noble, honest and laudable efforts in the cause of emancipation of the human mind and intellect. I would be delighted to join IRA, which is well aware of the obstruction of superstitious thought, either religious or secular, to human progress and happiness of mankind.

—Shafiqur Rahman,
Dacca, Bangladesh. Δ

NEWS AND NOTES

RATIONALIST BOOKS IN TELUGU

At a meeting of the executive committee of A. P. Radical Humanist Association held at Chirala on 6th June it was decided to publish three books in Telugu viz. 'What is Rationalism' by M. V. Ramamurthy and 'Nasikatvam & Nastitatyam' and 'Viswa Tatvam' by Ravipudi Venkatadri. A resolution was also passed opposing Vinoba Bhave's campaign for ban on cow-slaughter.

* * *

WARANGAL RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION FORMED.

At a meeting of the Rationalists of Warangal city convened by Dr. Har Gopal of Kakatiya University at the Town Hall on 3rd June it was decided to form a City Rationalist Association. Dr. Amjad Ali presided over the meeting.

Mr M. V. Ramamurthy, Vice-President of IRA explained the aims and objects of the Rationalist Movement and its present thrust. Ms. M. V. Subbamma, Vice President of A. P. Rationalist Association reported the proceedings of the A. P. Rationalist Conference held on 6th May at Eluru and exhorted the audience to form a local association. Mr V. S. Prasad of Kakatiya University endorsed the idea.

An Adhoc Committee of five including the President of the meeting with Mr. G. Seenivasa Reddy, lecturer in Public Administration of Kakatiya University was constituted. It was charged with the responsibility of bringing into existence the local association at meeting to be held later with due publicity. This meeting was attended by about 40 persons including lecturers, doctors and other elite of the town.

* * *

RATIONALIST STUDY COURSE AT VIJAYAWADA

Charvaka Rationalist Study Classes were conducted under the auspices of 'Charvaka Telugu Rationalist' monthly from 2nd to 5th June at Montessori College at Vijayawada under the presidency of Mr Eswara Prabhu. Prof. T. Venugopal of Siddhartha Engineering College inaugurated the Study Course.

Mr. Ravipudi Venkatadri, President of A.P. Rationalist Association spoke on 'Rationalism'. Mr. K. Padma Rao, vice-president of the said association spoke on 'Literature and Religion' and 'Exposure of Bible'. Ms. M. V. Subbamma another vice-president talked on 'Rationalism and Women'. Mr. M. V. Ramamurthy a vice-president of I.R.A. addressed the campers on 'Rationalism', 'Caste and Reservations', 'Secularism' and 'our Task'. Kalaprapurna Kondaveti Venkatakalvi, Venigella Subba Rao of A.P. Rationalist Association spoke on 'Legends and Myths' and 'Absurdities in Rituals and Worship' respectively. Mr. C. V. Enlightened the campers on 'Ancient Materialist Thought'. Mr. Eswara Prabhu poophooded the scriptures in his lecture. Mr. Nanduri Prasada Rao, Lavanam and Mr. Tummala Gopalakrishnaiah addressed the gatherings on

'Dialectical Materialism', 'Atheism' and 'Socialism' respectively. Mr. Tripuraneni Venkateswara Rao explained the several trends in Geeta.

In all 35 persons hailing from 11 districts from Vizianagaram to Bellare, Cuddapah, Nalgonda and Hyderabad benefitted from the course of 4 days.

* * *

DIVINE LIGHT IN PANTNAGAR

What are the dubious characters connected with the notorious Divine Life Society of that ill-famed Balyogeshwar of the yesteryears doing in this agricultural university? What are they up to? Intriguingly, why are the varsity officials extending their patronage to these people?

For answers, one has only to recall the alleged links of the society with the CIA and the activities of the Balyogeshwar and also, of course, the extensive connections of the varsity with CIA's front organisations.

It may be recalled the jetset, permanently teenaged godman Balyogeshwar, who married his American secretary much older than him and who was detained at the Palam airport for smuggling, had created much noise some years back. In that connection many revelations had also come to fore about his alleged association with CIA.

Of course, after that episode nothing much is heard about him as he had left the country with his secretary-cum-wife and settled in America. But his "mission" in the country continued its activities.

This varsity has got the dubious distinction of having relations with many CIA organizations and institutions like Ford

Foundation and Land Grant University. It used to get a lot of fund from these sources as also PL 480 funds. It was widely talked about in those days that many CIA operatives in the garb of academicians were infesting the varsity.

It may also be recalled that this area has been of special interest to the CIA and other foreign agencies for long, and now also it continues to be. A classic example of this is the "Peoples Colleges of Haldwani", which was notorious for its suspicious activities. The affairs of this college were discussed in the American senate also.

The activities of the Divine Life Society in this varsity started last year with a lecture session by Swamy Adhyamanand on Yoga and other subjects. The programme was organised by no less a person than the vice-chancellor himself.

From then onwards these dubious characters of the society are busy in the campus. What is more intriguing is that their movements are shrouded in much secrecy.

* * *

RATIONALISTS DENOUNCE VINOBA'S BLACKMAIL ON COW

The General Body Meeting of the Karnataka Rationalist Association, which met at Bangalore on 3-5-1979 to counter a blackmail of Vinoba Bhave on the cow-slaughter issue, passed resolutions congratulating the Governments of West Bengal and Kerala and opposing move to transfer the animal welfare subject from the State list to the concurrent list.

To express solidarity with the millions of beef-eater of India and those untouchables and others depending on the hides and skins

business the KRA decided to hold a "Beef Party" on May 15 at Bangalore.

Prof. A. M. Dharmalingam, President, in a speech said Vinoba Bhave never went on fast on the burning economic and social problems such as Jamshedpur communal Riots or massacre of untouchables. Mr. V. T. Rajshekar Shetty, Secretary, of the K.R.S. said cow-slaughter issue was taken up to finish the only leftist Governments in West Bengal and Kerala which had the highest concentration of Muslims in India. Prof. M. D. Nanjundaswamy, Jurist, said Mrs. Indira Gandhi was behind Vinoba's fast to force Janta to ban cow-slaughter which in turn would make Muslims to come back to her party. Prof. Cutinho of the Catholic Association of India spoke of the "conspiracy" to finish Muslims to come through cow-slaughter and Christians through "freedom of Religion Bill". Mr. Venkappa of the Dalit Action Committee said the Scheduled Caste and Tribes engaged in hide and skins business would be seriously affected by the ban on cow-slaughter. Mr. M. A. Delvi, Convenor of the Muslim-Dalit Alliance, asked Muslims to join hands with Dalits on this cow-slaughter issue because both would be hurt badly if cow-slaughter was banned.

The meeting unanimously passed many resolutions condemning the proposed ban on cow slaughter.

V. T. Rajasekhara Shetty.

INSTITUTE FOR ASTROLOGY

An Indian Institute of Astrology came into being here with Dr. P. C. Chunder, Union Education Minister, formally inaugurating in Calcutta on 27th May 1979. Dr. B. V. Raman is its president.

Dr. Raman suggested audaciously that astrology should be introduced as a subject of study in Indian universities. He said: "If we are really interested in studying and teaching Indian culture and philosophy, we should have chairs for the study and teaching of Indian astrology, yoga and other related disciplines." (Should we not then live down our past?—Ed.)

Dr. Raman claimed that astrology could fulfil a social necessity by assessing the type and capacity of person whose horoscope he had made.

The Institute will seek to bring together qualified and competent (?) astrologers in the country and to encourage the study of astrology by teaching and by conducting seminars and discussions."

SWAMI'S US ESTATE FOR SALE

Swami Satchidananda founder of the Integral Yoga Institute in New York is putting up a 323 acre estate in Falls village of Litchfield country for sale.

The estate believed to be worth \$ 400 000 was 'gifted' to him by the leading pop singer and composer Carole King.

Indian Express.

HIS 'SIN'. THEIR LUCK

A poor teashop owner of Ratlam was compelled to shave his head and offer meals to Brahmins just because he had committed the 'sin' of killing a squirrel.

Not only this, Mohan Yadav had to offer a silver squirrel at the Siddhnath temple in Ujjain before his caste panchayat agreed

to take him back in the community. His father also did not allow him to enter the house until he cleansed himself of the 'sin'.

Indian Express

* * *

TAX EXEMPTION TO SWAMIS

Exemption from payment of motor vehicle taxes enjoyed by swamis babas and monk so far had been withdrawn, Mr. Ven- gal Reddy, Andhra Transport Minister, announced on 27th May 1979.

Indian Express

* * *

THIRUPPAVAI FOR VENKATESWARA.

A hundred-sovereign gold chain with 30 'dollars' valued at Rs. 76,000 was offered to Venkateswara by a devotee from Tamil Nadu

The 30 Thiruppavai pasurams are inscribed, one each, on the dollars!

* * *

NEW SANCTION FOR K.K. NAGAR TEMPLE

The foundation for new 'garbagraha' in the 'Sakthi' Vinayakar temple at Karunanidhi Nagar, Madras will be laid early on July 5 morning. The 'garbagraha' to be built in Chola architecture, will cost about Rs. 1.5 lakhs.

To propagate the Vinayaka cult consecrated copper images of Vinayaka will be given to devotees against donations !!

Indian Express.

0 0 0

CONFRONTATION WITH SIVA- BALAYOGI

The Rationalist Association of Rama- chandrapuram, East Godavari District, A.P. has exposed to the public the hollowness of the tall claims made by the Sivabalayogi of Adivaraptupet on 4th March 1979.

Provoked by his statements in the press that he can cure any disease with the holy ash, convert any staunch atheist as a theist and show the spirits of dead persons, the rationalists of Ramachandrapuram area took up the challenge. After prolonged discussions lasting two hours he admitted unequivocally that he is an illiterate and has no superhuman powers whatsoever.

However he lingered on in his belief that he could cure any disease or deformity — the deaf, the dumb, the blind and diseases like cancer — with his holy ash. But he declined to subject his powers to scrutiny by rationalists and some experts in the field. Asked as to why he could not set right the deformity of his own hands, (he has crippled hands) he pulled a long face and said he was born to serve mankind and hence the holy ash was not meant for him.

When demanded to show the spirits, he evaded direct answer and said he could show them at his Bangalore Ashram which is being developed as a centre of his activities at a cost of lakhs of rupees. Rationalists of Bangalore are requested to pursue the matter.

On being challenged to convert the seventy odd rationalists present into theists he asked all of them to undertake penance for fourteen years under his guidance! The mediocre and mentally sick who flocked around him made much of him but the yogi himself seemed to be unpretentious and horribly ignorant of many things around him.

He claimed his training in 'dhyana' a science and a philosophy without understanding even how to spell these terms. The rationalists advised him not to use these terms any more as they have a different meaning.

He boasted that a number of doctors have been visiting him for the holy ash and 'darshan'!! 'They are probably mentally deranged' was the rebuff from the rationalists for which he had no answer. He said that some scientists sought his blessings before embarking upon a research project and expressed their gratitude after successfully completing their work! 'No scientific researcher worth the name would ever do this' was the answer from the rationalists.

It is curious how and why people donate lakhs of rupees to this Yogi. The rationalists feel that it is the duty of any welfare government to investigate into the funds collected to construct Ashrams. Mr. N. Rama Rao, Mr. N. V. Subba Rao, lecturers, V. S. M. College, Mr. P. Veerabhadra Rao, Mr. P. Mohana Rao, Mr. Sarvabhowma Rao, Mr. A. S. M. Krishna Rao, Mr. Bhaskara Reddy, Mr. M. Subba Reddy and over fifty other rationalists took part in this confrontation.

— N. Rama Rao,
Ramachandrapuram.

0 0 0

BARODA RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION INAUGURATED.

A Public Meeting was organized at Baroda on 3-6-79 under the auspices of Gujarat Rationalist Association. Mr. Kamala Shankar Pandya, President of G.R.A., presided over the meeting. In his welcome speech, Mr. K. K. Makwana detailed the qualities of the special invitees Prof. Ramanlal Pathak, a well known author, journalist and rationalist and Mr. Y. A. Lokhandwala, President of Indian Rationalist Association.

Mr. C. Sadanandan acknowledged that it would not have been that an easy task to arrange a rationalist meeting in a most superstitious state like Gujarat but for the sincere help and efforts put in by his friends present there. Keeping in line with the introduction of the special invitees by Mr. Makwana, he assured the members that they will not be disappointed.

Prof. Ramanlal Pathak thanked everybody responsible for honouring him as Chief Guest and talked at length about the urgent need for enlightening the illiterate masses by spreading the rationalist thinking and ideas throughout the world and briefed about his own venture as a journalist by contributing regularly in one of the leading newspapers of Gujarat under the caption 'Raman-Braman'. In his humorous speech, he emphasised the need for the educated rationalist thinkers to take the job of educating the illiterate brethren and thus spread the principles of rationalism.

In line with the requests of the members present, Mr. Y. A. Lokhandwala, president of Indian Rationalist Association, spoke about the mission entrusted to him by the I.R.A. during its Executive Council Meeting at Madras held recently and appealed to all present to leave no stone unturned to see that all the possible doors are tapped for the progress of rationalism.

Mr. Kamalashankar Pandya, President of G.R.A., a former president of I.R.A. and a veteran freedom fighter, in his wiry speech emphasised the need for helping the illiterate, downtrodden masses in achieving freedom of mind which is otherwise enslaved by superstitions. He applied to the members that force and agitation are not the right ways and asked the members not to be individualists but to mix with the people, help them in solving their problems and thus persuade

(Contd. on page 222)

The 'Religious tour' of Bohra High Priest

(The following is the full text of a letter, dated 9-2-79 written by Mr. Y. A. Lokhandwala, President of I.R.A. to Atal Behari Vajpayee, Minister for Foreign Affairs on the suspected anti national activities of the High Priest of Bohra community— Ed.)

To
The Minister for Foreign Affairs
Government of India,
New Delhi.

Sub: Bohra High Priest Mr. Mohamed Burhannuddin's meeting with Dr. Kurt Waldheim arranged by Pakistan's Ambassador in U.S.A.

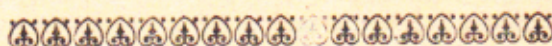
Dear Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee,
From your boyhood you are avowedly ultra-nationalist and therefore I am sure you will be shocked to learn that Mr. Mohamed Burhannuddin the Bohra High Priest, who proclaims himself on every available occasion, as an Indian national, had arranged his meeting with Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the Secretary General of the United Nations, when recently he was on his so called religious tour of the United States through the Ambassador of Pakistan in U.S.A. as reported in several newspapers, specifically in Bohra Chronicle, a fortnightly, dated 1-2-79, the clipping wherefrom has been enclosed.

I hope you will please take serious note of such nefarious act of the said Mr. Mohamed Burhannuddin, who while parading under the garb of religious activities is suspected of carrying on anti-national activities such as transfer of funds to foreign countries, surreptitious foreign exchange transactions etc. and take prompt and effective steps to curb his such activities,

I request you to please keep me informed of the steps taken in the matter. from time to time.

Sincerely,
Y. A. Lokhandwala,
President, I.R.A.

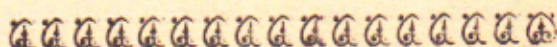
cc: The President,
Central Board of Dawood
Bohra Community,
Bombay-9.



INTERNATIONAL RATIONALIST EXHIBITION

The First International Exhibition of Literature for non-believers is being organized at Stockholm University, Sweden from 1-9-79 to 30-9-79. The following are the primary objectives of the Exhibition.

1. To show the Swedish public the literary works of non-believers (free thinkers, agnostics, secularists, humanists, atheists, rationalists, etc.) and to spread knowledge of the non-believers difficulties in the development of cultural activities in their native countries.
2. To stimulate the growth of an international attention on this matter.
3. To exhibit a panorama of the non-believers culture.
4. To assemble an extensive documentation of the non-believers thought.
5. To establish cultural contacts among non-believers and representatives of the Swedish cultural life.
6. To foster an awareness of the non-believers thought and fight against prejudices in this matter.



Ahmadiyyas'

Unscientific Theories!

—Ms. S.V. Vasundhra

For decades and centuries, the 'educated' believers have been relentlessly trying to prove their hypotheses—'god exists', 'god created the universe', 'god controls the universe' etc., etc., logically and scientifically. Though unfortunately for the believers, the concept of God is beyond logic and science the believers are yet to give up their attempts. Sometimes, perhaps desperately, they advance well accepted scientific theories and mathematical equations to prove the existence of God as a result of which eventually they make themselves a laughing stock.

Though they will never be able to convince the confirmed rationalists who critically examine the theories advanced by believers, frequently they succeed in confusing and keeping back their own followers in their own fold

Here is a classic example of the desperate attempts being made by Ahmadiyyas to expand their cult by misusing the scientific theories to support their beliefs. Though Ahmadiyyas are supposed to be a rebel group among Muslims, there is not much of a difference between people of this cult and other Muslims, excepting that the former have accepted one more human being — Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed as a Messiah in addition to the earlier Prophet—Mohammed. Since the limited object of this article is to expose the abuse of scientific formulae by the Ahmadiyyas the other aspects of Ahmadiyyas are not being gone into.

About a year, back on 10-6-78, the Ahmadiyya Information Service at Telli-cherry published a small leaflet with the caption 'IS THERE NOT A CREATOR BEHIND THE UNIVERSE?' A few copies of this leaflet were received directly by I.R.A. Head Quarters at Madras, and several others from its Senior Members, Subscribers etc. The following is the full text of the leaflet.

IS THERE NOT A CREATOR BEHIND THE UNIVERSE?

1. Can something come out of nothing?
2. If something come out of nothing should there not be something eternal?
3. If there is not a creator, and as $E = mc^2$, is energy eternal?
- 4 (a) Is this 'eternal energy' single or several?
- (b) If it is single how can it become positive or negative?
- (c) If it is several, what or who orders this combination?

- 5 (a) Is energy conscious?
- (b) Has it imagination?
- (c) Did energy bring the universe into material existence according to its design?
6. If we, the product of energy, can make energy subservient to us, why the 'all powerful and eternal' energy is deprived of this faculty?
7. As science has so far failed to understand energy, is it not unscientific thinking to believe that there is nothing behind energy?

L-88
10-6-78

AHMADIYYA INFORMATION SERVICE,
Tellicherry,

Since it was felt that this pamphlet was directed towards Confirmed Rationalists who are committed to scientific outlook, I.R.A. took immediate steps to counter the intellectual onslaught by Ahmadiyyas on Rationalists. In consultation with Mr. Dinesh Nettar, the Scientific Adviser of I.R.A., the General Secretary of I.R.A. has sent the following reply containing answers to the seven questions posed by Ahmadiyyas.

24-7-78

The Secretary,
Ahmadiyya Information Service,
Tellicherry.

Sir,

We happened to receive a questionnaire bearing No. L-88 dated 10-6-78 published by you from one of the subscribers of our journal FREETHOUGHT. As he desired us to furnish our answers to the questionnaire, we are sending hereunder

the same rather briefly. Though many of the questions given in the questionnaire themselves are incorrect, we tried to give answers with necessary notations wherever required.

1. No.
2. Yes.
3. Yes, the sum total of mass and energy is constant.
- 4 (a) Question is vague.
- (b) Energy is always positive. For the sake of convenience it may be assumed to be negative with respect to some standard value.
- (c) Energy behaves on its own.
- 5 (a) No, since it is not a living being.
- (b) No, since it is not a living being.
- (c) The energy and the universe are the same and it does not have a design.
6. We are part of energy and not the product of energy—the word faculty at the end of the question is vague.
7. Question No. 3 itself admits that science has understood energy and when the entire universe itself is energy the suggestion 'behind energy' has no meaning.

These questions arise because of the extension of laws of 'living beings' to 'non-living things' which is not valid. Words like 'subservient', 'conscious', 'imagination', 'eternal', 'bring into existence' etc, are examples of this.

While on this you are requested to offer your own comments on the following :

1. If God is infinite, any part of God is also infinite (except a zero-part). Since our world is finite our world is not a part of God.
2. Any interaction between an infinite function (God) and a finite function (man) is also infinite.

i.e. f [God] (if any) f [man]
 $\propto \infty$ = infinity

Since we observe only finite interaction

f [God] (if any) is not equal to infinity.

3. $E = mc^2$ indicates a finite mass-energy transformation. If God is energy and is transformed into the universe, he does not exist now. Also, there is no evidence against this equation and hence 'God' obeys Einstein.

Before concluding, we would like to inform you that during the past several thousands of years no scientists, mathematicians or logicians have been able to prove the existence of God by scientific formulae, or logical deductions or indications. While we have no objection to your holding whatever beliefs you would like to have, kindly do not try to confuse yourself and confuse the people by using all sorts of scientific jargon and equations.

Thanking you.

Yours humanly,
 Sd. A. Suryanarayana
 General Secretary.

The following further correspondence exchanged between the General Secretary of I.R.A. and his counterpart in Ahmadiyya Information service makes interesting reading :

Mr. M. Kunhamu's letter, dated 29-7-78 :

Sir.

Many thanks for your mutilated letter No. 83/10110/54, dated 24-7-78.

If you have published the questionnaire L-88 and your answers in your FREE-THOUGHT, please send us a copy of the same.

We will send our reply on receipt of your response.

Thank you,

Yours very humanly,
 Sd. M. Kunhamu.

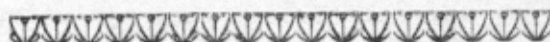
Mr. A. Suryanarayana's letter dated 3-8-78 :

Dear Sir,

This has reference to your letter of 29th July 1978. We have so far not published the questionnaire and our answers in our journal FREETHOUGHT. If you can send your comments to our answers as also on the points raised by us we can make a comprehensive coverage in our FREETHOUGHT.

Thanking you.

Yours humanly,
 Sd. A. Suryanarayana.



READ

"Charvaka"

(Telugu Rationalist Monthly)

Annual Subscription : Rs. 10/-

Single copy : 80 ps.

Free for IRA Members in lieu of
 FREETHOUGHT

Write to :

Charvaka, No. 22, State Bank of India
 Colony No. 1, Vijayawada-10



Mr. Kunhamu's letter dated 8-8-78 :

Dear Sir,

With reference to your No. 54/103, dated 3-8-78, we have to say that it is not a personal matter between us. Therefore let the public know what is going on between us. We repeat you please publish our questionnaire and your answers in your journal FREETHOUGHT. Let your readers have their views on this topic.

Please don't be in a hurry.

Reason will really triumph.

Yours humanly,

Sd. M. Kunhamu.

Mr. Suryanarayana's letter dated 12-8-78 :

This has reference to your letter of 8th instant. We do agree that the whole issue is not a personal matter between the undersigned and you. This is, an issue in which the entire Ahmadiyya community and the rationalists are concerned. When we have tried to answer the questions posed by you, it is now for you to offer your comments on the points raised by us.

Kindly leave the question of publication of the matter in FREETHOUGHT to us. Let the Editor of the journal exercise his prerogative to time its publication when the whole matter comes to a shape. As desired by you, we are sending by a separate post a specimen copy of our journal FREETHOUGHT. We fully agree with you that Reason will really triumph over all the religions.

Thanking you.

Yours humanly,

Sd. A. Suryanarayana,
General Secretary.

Mr. Kunhamu's letter, dated 21-8-78 :

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 83/172, dated 12-8-78, we have to inform you that you will find our answers in our next leaflet which will be out in a few weeks. If you are not satisfied with that, then we will take up your matter separately and send you our detailed answers and comments.

For our publications please contact :

Nazir Dawat-o-Tabligh,

Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya,

Qadian-143516 (Gurdaspur, Punjab).

Yours very humanly,

Sd. M. Kunhamu.

In September, 1978 one more pamphlet containing another seven questions under the caption 'IS MATTER SELF-EXISTING?' was received by I.R.A. directly from Telli-cherry as well as through some of its Members who received them from Tellicherry. The full text of this pamphlet is reproduced below :



For New Readers

A few copies of Bound Volumes of FREETHOUGHT are available for sale.

Year	Vol. No.	No. of Pages	Price
1975	V	168	Rs. 8/-
1976	VI	220	Rs. 10/-
1977	VII	304	Rs. 12/-
1978	VIII	384	Rs. 15/-

Please rush your orders to avoid disappointment.

Treasurer, I.R.A.
Madras 8



IS MATTER SELF-EXISTING?

1. If so, why there is evolution, development, organisation and cognition? What is there to evolve; develop, organise and cognise, if matter is really self-existing? Can something come out of nothing? Is not the 'self-existing' matter self-sufficient?
2. Why do all material objects contain opposites? Why can't the self-existing matter be absolutely uniform? Does energy exist in pure detached form? Why energy which is 'neither created nor destroyed' is so helpless that it cannot exist alone but is always attached to material objects?
3. As matter cannot exist without motion and the self-existing matter is to be infinite in space-time, how can there be space for motion, since infinite space is to be occupied by infinite matter? As such, what sort of a domain it will be? Will it not be a domain of non-motion, non-time, non-space, non-matter of nothing and still existing and manifesting itself as there should have been something from all eternity?
4. When matter which is infinite in space-time is impossible will it not be finite in space-time?
5. Can matter which is finite in space-time come into existence from nowhere? If it cannot, then should not the finite space-time matter be a reflected-image of the domain which is beyond the conception of space-time?

6. Does not the finite space-time matter reveal the presence of a Superior Self-existing and All-sustaining Power?
7. O Man! What has made thee arrogant about thy Lord the bountiful. (Quran 82:7).

L-89 AHMADIYYA INFORMATION
10-9-78 SERVICE, TELLICHERRY

The following are the answers of I.R.A. sent to Tellicherry under cover of their letter dated 25-9-1978.

MATTER AND ENERGY ARE TOGETHER SELF-EXISTING.

1. Evolution, reorganization etc., are results of the universal law of least action and the second law of thermodynamics. All physical phenomena tend to increase the entropy and specifically, chemical reactions decrease the free energy. Nothing can come out of nothing. The word 'self-sufficient' has no meaning, since matter, in general is non-living and has no needs to suffice or not.
2. All material objects do not contain opposites, for example, there is no opposite for water. At the fundamental level, anti-matter exists, but here, only the charge on some particles is opposite, but the mass is not, eg. electron and positron. Protons have no opposite. The question 'why can't matter be absolutely uniform?' has no meaning, since matter has no brain to think and be so. That it is not uniform is an observation. Energy does exist in a detached form, for example, light coming

to us from the stars, or that in a laser beam. Energy is not 'neither created nor destroyed', but it is transformed into matter and vice versa.

3. Matter can exist without relative motion, and as per the theory of relativity, there is no absolute motion. The word 'infinite' is only a mathematical entity defined

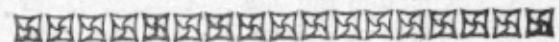
as $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{n}$. It has no real

significance. Hence, in practice, 'infinite matter' and 'infinite space' are meaningless terms. Einstein has shown that just as an ant walking along a circle can walk forever without reaching the end, yet, the circle is finite, our experience of space in the universe is limited to a finite space though there will be no 'end' to the universe. Space-time is a complex domain that can be well understood only in the language of mathematics and not English.

4. Already answered
5. The phrase 'come into existence' is misleading, as if it is to be 'born', like living things. Matter has been there for all the time that we are aware of. If one speaks of something beyond our space-time, one can also ask 'how did this super space-time domain come into existence?' 'What was there before this extra-universal entity came 'into existence?' and so on. It must be remembered that when one theorises of a system to explain certain observations, the questions must be put of that system also.

6. The question is already answered. If one assumes that a 'superior self-existing and all-sustaining power' (which we shall call as god for convenience) exists, can one not frame this very same questionnaire with the word 'god' instead of 'matter'.

7. Whether 'god' exists or not may be a matter of pure academic exercise, but that the most heinous barbarities are committed in the name of god is a fact. Jihad, the war of religion, advocates killing the Kafirs. How can one accept this, when there is but one Allah (according to Quoran) and He must have 'created' the Kafirs also? How can women be second grade citizens when they are also the



Let Reason Prevail Upon Superstition

THERMOGRAPHY
MODERN CONCEPT OF
DIGNIFIED PRINTING

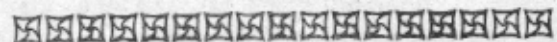
It lends lustre & dignity to
wedding, greeting, invitation and
visiting cards, letter-heads,
testimonials, etc.

 **MODEL
ART
PRINTERY PVT. LTD.**

LEADING THERMOGRAPHERS
QUALITY PRINTERS

MUN.IND. ESTATE, K. KHADYE MARG
BOMBAY. 4000-11. Phone. 374757

Leading Thermographers in Asia



'creation' of Allah? Why should only the man have the right of 'talaq'? The land of the Prophet has never been without a war. General Yahya Khan, the blood-thirsty butcher of Bangladesh was also a creation of Allah, and so were the innocent millions of Bangladesh.

Finally, why should Mohammad alone be the prophet? Why not the people of I.R.A.?"

Though it was expected that the Ahmadiyyas would care to examine the replies offered by I.R.A. to the questions posed by them, surprisingly they have chosen to ignore our replies with a most discourteous letter. The following is the full text of their letter dated 5-10-78:

Dear Mr. conscious living matter,

When I read your stupid remarks on my L-88 of 16-5-78, I thought L-89 of 10-9-78 would re-educate you a little in thinking about the search of matter, but you have turned out to be a good for nothing living matter.

As for your 'God checkmated' I have to say that it is a bushes of scores of stupidities.

Since you have denied the existence of a creator behind matter, and since you have no alternative explanation of the mechanism of matter, you are condemned by the originator of matter.

"And those who look out for a meeting with us say: Why are angels sent down to us? Why do we not see our Lord? Surely they are too proud of themselves and have greatly exceeded the bounds.

On the day when they see the angels—there will be no good tidings on that day for the good and they will say: Would these were a great barrier!

And we shall turn to the.....they did and we shall scatter into particles of dust."

Yours materially,
Sd. M. Kunhamu.

The General Secretary of I.R.A. has most politely appealed to the Ahmadiyyas to be considerate to those who cannot be convinced with their pseudo science in defence of the existence of god. Here is the full text of I.R.A's letter dated 18-11-78:

Sir,

This has reference to your letter of 9th October, 1978. As I was pre-occupied with our own organisational matters I could not reply to you earlier.

At the outset let me remind you of my correct name as christened by my parents — A. Suryanarayana — I do not think that the 'conscious living matter' if at all the same makes any sense — is a proper noun. It is not an accepted form of salutation either.

While you have full liberty to consider our replies to your questions as stupid, as a rational animal, you should be prepared to amplify your comment. Please therefore advise me on what grounds you consider each of our replies as stupid.

Similarly you are earnestly requested to substantiate your statement that the 'God Checkmated' is also stupid. By the by have you been able to offer any answers to the questions contained therein? As you would have noticed from the introduction itself, those who cannot offer reasonable, sensible and logical answers to the questions have no moral right to defend their god. Inasmuch as you have not so far returned the

copy with your answers, whether they are correct or not, you have forfeited your right to denounce the non-believers and supporting the so called creator.

I am sorry to learn from your letter that I have been condemned by the originator of matter. Instead of merely abusing me and conveying the manner in which the originator of matter has condemned me, you could have very well requested our creator to set me right. If you can inform me why your (or my?) creator created me at all especially in this way only to deny the very existence of the creator, I shall be wiser at least in future. Would you go to the extent of saying that it was a defective manufacture of creatures like me?

When I first saw your questions, I thought that your movement endeavours to scientifically explain the tenets of quoran if not other religions. When I received your letter without any scientific explanations to disprove the validity of our replies I am a bit disillusioned. I also felt that you, Ahmadiyyas should have at least developed better tolerance towards others who do not agree with whatever your movement advocates. Certainly yours is not the correct way of winning people to your fold.

At least now, I hope, you will try to disprove our earlier answers and the contents of GOD CHECKMATED.

Yours humanly,
Sd. A. Suryanarayana

Since the Ahmadiyyas insist that their questions and our answers should be published in FREETHOUGHT, it is being now done without their own comments on I.R.A's replies. It should be obvious for the readers of the reasons for the silence of Ahmadiyyas in this matter. It is also hoped that the readers themselves will understand

the hollowness of the scientific knowledge of Ahmadiyyas and also their unwillingness of even reading the replies given to their own questions. When they do not want anybody to comment on their questions, it is not known why they should pose the questions at all. Perhaps these may be the tenets of their cult! △

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

VIVEKANANDA AND THE COW

In these days when babas and their hangers-on, both spiritual and temporal are deciding what our Constitution should say on cow slaughter, it will be interesting to recall what Swami Vivekananda had to say on the subject. Following is a dialogue on cow protection between the Swami and an official of the Gorakshani Sabha which appears in 9th volume of Vivekananda's teaching and writings:

SWAMIJI:

There has been a terrible famine in central India this year. The Government of India has said, nine lakh people have died of starvation. Has your sabha organised any relief work for the victims of this famine?

SABHA OFFICIAL:

The famine is the result of the Karma of the sin of the people. Besides, we do not organize any relief during famines. Our sabha has been established only for the protection of mother cow and her progeny.

SWAMI:

(His face flushed, but in a controlled voice).....Mother cows are going to the slaughter house and getting butchered on account of their own karma. You have nothing to do in that regard.

OFFICIAL: (flustered):

The cow is our mother.

SWAMI: (laughing):

That I can quite see.

Critical Study of Islam

U. A. Lokhandwala

and

A. Engineer

Islam is a religious ideology which completely transformed the society then obtaining in Arabia, retaining some of its essential features which did not clash with Islam's new value system.

At that time Mecca was an international centre of commerce as well as high finance. Many of the Quranic verses bear out this fact. In reality there were no traces of feudalism either in the nomadic tribes of Arabian desert, or in the commercial town of Mecca. Agricultural production was unknown in and around the area where Islam was born. The Arab world was very different from Europe of middle ages. In this Arab world then, as well as today, exist three zones which differ widely from each other in social structure and in political and economic organisation. These three zones are the Arab East called Al Mashreq, which comprises of Arabia, Syria which then included the present day Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and Iraq, the countries of the Nile including Egypt and Sudan;

and the third zone of Arab west called Al Maghrib, which stretched to Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania. In these three zones only Egypt was then and still continues to be a peasant civilisation (not a feudal one), whereas the social formations of the East and the West Zones have not been based on the cultivators of the soil.

Prof W. M. Watt describes Bedouins' religion as tribal humanism. He states, "The thought that is uppermost in the mind of the individual (Bedouin) is that of the honour of the tribe. Life is meaningful for him if it is honourable."

Mohamed was a town-dweller and naturally had some prejudice against Bedouins as they were not easily prepared to submit to the discipline. Mohammed wanted to impose upon them. However, he was determined to bring them into the fold of Islam and therefore, number of times they have been addressed, exhorted and reminded of Allah's bountless on them in several verses in Quran. Thus, Quran has distinguished between the nomads and the town-dwellers. The social norms, administration of law and mode of worship were akin to those obtaining then in Egypt. The people there worshipped number of gods and goddesses such as Atar — the personification of planet Venus. They also worshipped lunar gods in different parts of the Southern Arabia — Almaqah in Saba territory, Wadd (love) in Mahin, Amm in Qutaban and Sin in Hadramaut. The Sun was also worshipped as goddess Shams.

In a non-agricultural society like that of central Arabia, there is nothing like sowing season, harvesting season etc. Hence, solar calendar which ensures regularity of seasonal pattern was never evolved in Arabia.

There being excessive heat in Arabia, the cool moonlit nights had greater attraction for the Arabs and consequently moon as a deity took precedence over sun.

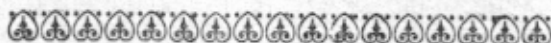
Around 356 AD first Christian ambassador was sent by emperor Constantius to South Arabia. The notice of Christian mission from Rome was obviously political. As for Judaism, it struck its foothold in southern Arabia during the reign of second Himyarite king. Thereafter Abraham ruled over Yemen till late sixth century, and turned it into an Abyssinian colony. He built a magnificent cathedral in the city of Sana with a religio-economic motive. Abraham wanted Sana's Cathedral to outdo the pagan Ka'bah and make it a rival centre of trade as well as religion. Partly he succeeded in doing so. This religio-economic rivalry provoked two Meccan Arabs to pollute Sana's Cathedral during a festival, which enraged Abraham to march an invasion on Mecca in order to destroy the pagan temple of Kabah.

Since there were elephants in his army, that year in Mecca was termed "am al-feel" meaning year of the elephant. However, small-pox epidemic engripped his army and he had to retreat without doing any damage. Mohammed the prophet of Islam was born in the same year, i.e. 570-571 A.D.

When the prophet of Islam began to preach, there were number of deities in the sanctuary of Kaba and around it, which they worshipped. Those deities were not of the native origin. Ibn Hisham, one of the early historians of Islam, says that idolatry, that is the use of stone images carved-out to resemble human beings, was introduced in Mecca from Syria only in Mohammed's life time. The Muslim historians do not refer to the unbelieving Arabs as idolators, but as "associators", meaning persons who associate the local spirits with god. Al-Sharestani, a noted Muslim historian, says

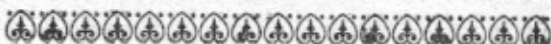
that there were 360 idols in Kaba, Chief among them was Hobal brought from Belka in Syria by Amru ibn Lohai, pretending it will procure rain when required.

Due to hard desert conditions, the Arabs were down to earth and simple people. Hence, they considered time to be the destroyer. This thought runs through the literature of the Arabs. Time these Arabs thought, settles men's fate, strive how we will. Hence, they worshipped Manat, the goddess of fortune, which was a household deity among Bedouins. Manat did not have any particular shape. At times large rude stones, were installed and worshipped as Manat. There was no organised religion as such, nor an institution of priesthood to perform elaborate rituals, which those nomadic Arabs could ill-afford. Hence, early Arab society, unlike Greek, Egyptian or Indian societies, was devoid of colourful imagination of deities or mythology. The Quaranic Mythology is also not a native Arab mythology, but it is derived from Judaism and Christianity. The nomadic Arabs practiced a naturalistic and animistic religion worshipping stones and trees. They



ELECTRONIC COMPUTER, TO SEE, TASTE AND HEAR.

A series of instruments stimulating the functioning of the human sense organs has been created at the radio and Electronics Institute in Kharkov. The scientists have "taught" the electronic computer to see, taste and hear. The first devices with "sense organs" are already working at Kharkov's medical institutions, helping doctors detect the malfunctioning of the human organism at the early stages of a disease.



conceived of demons (Jinns) benevolent and malevolent. The Quran also talks of jinns as a different order of creatures who put evil suggestions in man's mind. Absence of mythology in Islam indicates that the central Arabia where Islam originated had not, by then, evolved material civilisation at sufficiently high and complex level.

Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, started preaching his new religion in Mecca. Mecca at that time was dominated by the Quresh tribe. The tribe of Quresh made all round efforts to enhance the commercial progress of Mecca, which ultimately made it a predominant tribe, to the extent that after the death of the prophet, it dictated that the Caliph could be chosen only from Quresh tribe, though it was against the concept of equal rights to all the Muslims, irrespective of their tribal associations, as preached by Mohammed.

Prof. W. M. Matt says "The leading men of Mecca in Mohammed's time were above all financiers, skillful in the manipulations of credit, shrewd in their speculations and interested in any potentialities of lucrative investment from Aden to Ganga or Damascus. The Quran appeared not in the atmosphere of the desert but that of high finance.

In nomadic society of Bedouins, collective ownership was prevalent, but in Mecca, due to emergence of commercial society, individual ownership had come into vogue. Islam fulfilled this vital necessity. Although highly commercial operations were taking place in Mecca, there was no organised state no bureaucracy or standing army. As agriculture was not possible there, feudalism or institution of kingship could not develop. One of the significant works of Mohammed

was to bring into being a sort of state machinery, which remained in primitive shape during his life time. Mohammed wanted to unite the Arabs to be able to stand up to other peoples in the world i.e. the Romans and the Persians. Mohammed succeeded in establishing unity among Arabs, but he did it on his own ground without compromising with the oligopolists of Mecca. For achieving this he had to migrate from Mecca and to take recourse to certain measures to throttle the economy of Mecca, which, coupled with other diplomatic measures and threat of armed invasion forced Mecca to surrender.

(To be contd.)



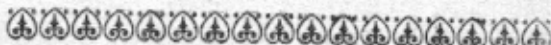
'A REBIRTH TRAGEDY

A 31-year old villager who thought he would take rebirth in a royal family killed his wife and two children and then committed suicide by jumping into a well in Bansi village of Jaipur district, according to a report.

Before committing the crime, he wrote a letter to the police stating, 'There is no need to be perturbed. I am going for getting rebirth. I am not dying but shall soon be reborn in the Jaipur royal family as a son of Mr. Bhawani Singh, the former ruler of Jaipur'.

The police said the Villager was suffering from insomnia for the last four years and committed the crime in an unbalanced state of mind.

--- Times of India,
27-5-79.



Tenets of Islam Twisted

[The following is the full text of a letter written by Mr. Khadija Hatim Motiwala published in Times of India, dated 3—4—1979. —Ed.]

Sir,

The "revolution guards" of Teheran fired in the air to frighten and scare away 15,000 women staging a non-violent demonstration outside the Iranian Prime minister's office to protest against Ayatollah Khomeini's fiat that female civil servants should go to their respective offices wearing burqua. At the same time, 200 bulbas, claiming to be the Ayatollah's followers, tried to crown the slogans of the women demanding justice and equality, and denouncing enslavement of women, with shouts of "Allah-o-Akbar."

On the next day, those who call themselves Islamic guards prevented office-going women, dressed in their usual attire, from entering their offices and forcibly drove them away after shouting "naked girls go home." Some of the women who expressed resentment against this brutality perpetrated by Khomeini's henchmen in the name of Islam were actually knifed by the latter.

From incidents like this we can have a fair idea of the shape of things to come, of what to expect from a regime dominated by Ayatollahs, Mullahs or Maulvis. Some of the "social reforms" the Ayatollah wants

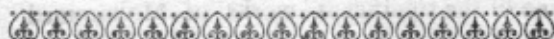
to impose are: prohibition on women appearing in public, strict enforcement of the purdah system, reintroduction of polygamy and a system of 'tallaq' that discriminates against women and makes them dependent on the mercy of men. All these in the name of Islamic revolution!

If there is anything in the Koran which compels women to cover their faces this mediaeval code now requires urgent and drastic revision. Let the old beliefs be discarded altogether: why expose half of humanity to insults, injustice and indignity? If the tenets of Islam can be twisted in any way to suit the whims and convenience of all sorts of orthodox fanatics and other opportunists, why can they not be modified rationally by applying thoroughly scientific tests? What virtues are there in perpetuating age-old notions that no longer meet our present needs in the changed circumstances and act as a drag on society, prevent necessary changes and inhibit progress?



THE FIRST PLANE IN THE WORLD

The first plane in the world was made by the Russian inventor Alexander Mozhaisky. He was born in 1825 into a seafarer's family. He was a seaman and a wonderful mechanic himself. Since internal combustion engines were very primitive at that time, he installed two steam engines on his plane. Ivan Golubev, a worker mechanic, Mozhaisky's faithful assistant, lifted the plane into the air on July 20, 1882 (21 years before the Wright Brothers). It was the world's first flight of a vehicle heavier than air.



Let the so-called fundamentalists first define the term 'Islamic revolution.' For them it only appears to mean putting the clock back and reviving most of the pernicious socio-religious practices of the mediaeval period.

A much more significant and vital issue is involved here as Governments of more and more Muslim majority states, which have failed to meet the needs and aspirations of their people, are in a hurry to declare themselves as "Islamic republics" in the hope that such a stunt would give them some reprieve from the increasing pressure of harsh realities which they are otherwise unable to cope with.

It's a tragedy that those who call themselves Mussalmans have not yet realised that religion can never be the basis of a modern progressive state and that imposition of ideas, institutions and systems which may have met some of the needs of the seventh century Arabia will not solve to-day's problems.

What is needed for the amelioration of any society, Muslim or non-Muslim, is a distinct sociopolitical-economic programme—a clear-cut "Ideology", if you like that term—that would take into account the present reality and lead towards the establishment of a progressive, just and fair social order free from all sorts of exploitation and oppression, including oppression and exploitation perpetrated in the name of religion.

And, finally, why are the leaders who claim to speak for the Indian Muslims silent on all these issues? I invite them to come out in the open, so that people know them for what they really are."

— Mrs. Khadija Hatim Mitowala.

The following is the full text of the rejoinder dated 5-4-79 written by the President of IRA to the Editor, Times of India, Bombay, supporting the contention of Mrs. Khadija Hatim Motiwala.

Sir,

Appropose Mrs. Khadija Hatim Motiwala's letter published in your issue of the 3rd April 1979, I challenge Muslim Olemas who claim that Quran has prescribed the covering of the whole body, from tip to toe, of every woman by burqa, rida or chader, to prove it dispassionately bereft of fanatic fervor, before a panel of modern theologists on Islam. There is a couplet in Quran which is oft distortedly interpreted by fanatics, but really means to advise women to cover only their chest properly so as to safeguard that part of the body from exposition. Further, Quran has advised women to dress themselves gorgeously and to adorn themselves with ornaments only to please their husbands and not for display to other men.

However, Khomeini and mini-Khomeinles like Bohra highpriest are forcing upon women the distorted version of Islamic tenets to put on burqa or rida to arrest the ground slipping under their feet with the progress of scientific attitude being progressively created in women.

If Khomeini and others of his tribe sincerely mean to re-establish true tenets of Islam, which will be welcomed by the multitudes of suffering people, Muslims as well as non-Muslims, all over the world, they should strive for establishing equality amongst all Muslims, which is a very vital and most laudable tenet of Islam. This equality has been meant to be established economically, socially, politically and all round. That will re-establish the true image of Islam, rather than the out-dated barbaric norms of purda for women and cutting of hands for theft etc., which tarnishes the image of Islam and seems to be so designed by the interested powers of the world. ▲

—Y. A. Lokhandwala.

BOOK REVIEW :

Secular Morality

(A Solvent of Contemporary Spiritual Crisis, by Prem Nath Bazaz. Vantage Press Inc. New York. 172 pp. 6.95 dollars)

At a time when the world is witnessing a disturbing resurgence of primitive Islamic belief affecting the lives of 700 million people in Asia, Prem Nath Bazaz's book has particular significance. More so because in India too we are aware of a similar revivalism in Hindu orthodoxy. While the country flounders in a morass of corruption and immorality self-righteous Indian leaders hark back to obsolete and anachronistic moral systems convinced that only in going backwards can we now hope to move forward with our innocence restored. But does India's "ancient cultural heritage" have the answers? Clearly not, in Bazaz's thinking, nor in that of any other rationalist. Indeed such a path is likely to lead the country further into the wilderness. Salvation lies in rationalism and the fostering of a secular morality.

Bazaz's thesis is simply written. He does not confuse profundity with obscurity and his arguments are trenchantly clear. He begins by tracing the evolution of human society, the beginnings of social morality, and the final emergence of religion which pre-empted morality and deprived it of its original rational basis.

If his viewpoint is different, it is because he is different. To him morality is not the

same as what it appears to religious zealots, mullahs, ayatollahs, padres and priests. "I believe morality consists in having a strong sense of justice solely guided by reason and not directed by any external or supernatural forces," he says.

Social morality within early tribes evolved into customs, and the purpose of these customs was to secure rudimentary justice and happiness for all members of the group. The higher rose the sense of morality, the superior and more refined became the quality of civilisation."

But lust for power gave rise to religion and thereafter religion declared those customs divine and immutable that invested certain sections of society with unquestioned privilege. When a chief's authority came from the gods, anybody defying it stood in danger of destruction by divine wrath.

"In moral codes drawn up under religious ascendancy the goal of man's happiness was thrown aside." Instead man was to

BATTERY DRIVEN CARS

Euroforum of Brussels reports that by 1990 more than seven million electric vehicle are expected to be driven in the European Community. These cars will be non-pollutant, silent and will consume only a minimal amount (2%) of total electricity produced in the area.

Electric Auto Corporation of Hato Rey, Puerto Rico, is planning to produce electric cars for the United States by 1980. The Silver Volt is a five passenger station wagon capable of going 70 miles per hour and 100 miles on a single charge.

humbly accept his exploitation as God's will. If he was miserable he was told it was because he lacked faith. Moral laws now became immutable and unjust. Blind belief ensured total obedience by the many to the few.

In the course of human history where religion has changed it has been chiefly because of heretics and skeptics, many of whom challenged these values at the cost of their lives.

But such intellectual courage is sadly deficient among the newly liberated Afro-Asian nations. Despite their education, the elite are still prisoners of their past. Education has failed to impart true knowledge.

"True knowledge consists in critically examining matter, especially one's behaviour and intelligently grasping the core of a problem; it transcends current prejudices, detects inequality, opposes evil traditions, spurns superstitions, checks passions, regulates emotions, and refines moral laws."

Such qualities make for dynamic leadership, but leaders of developing nations seem to lack them. And no country demonstrates this better than India.

The author examines the nature of 'conscience'. He refutes the traditional idea that it is an inborn trait which directs its owner rightly or wrongly. He also rejects the religious belief that it is a sign of man's divinity and is god-given. If it were so, then there should be no evil in the world.

Conscience is simply a faculty which, like reason, must be cultivated and shaped to a particular end. Neither is it a universal thing. It derives its character from the social milieu which nurtures it. Social mores decide what must appear good or bad to an individual's conscience. Thus while a Hindu

sees beef-eating as sacrilege, it does not appear so to a Muslim. But since each believes conscience is derived from God, implacable hatred divides them.

Rationally, it follows that the quality of conscience depends largely on what nourishment it receives. Within a degenerate social environment it becomes twisted and even withers away. This decadence is what afflicts contemporary Indian society and accounts for corruption and immorality.

While conscience is not a universal thing, the qualities to which it aspires are universal like truthfulness, brotherhood, compassion, courage, self-sacrifice etc. These are not coloured by any cultural belief. They are universal principles of humanism. "The more conscience is influenced by these principles, the nearer its possessor is to *Homo sapiens sapiens* (Modern Man)".

Bazaz then briefly traces the role of rationalism in Western thought. "Unlike,

TRACES OF AN ANCIENT METEORITE

A giant meteorite fell down in the Zhemanshin Gorge in Kazakhstan a million years ago. Having knocked against the earth it exploded and formed a crater with a diameter of eight kilometres.

Though the hollow was filled with water traces of the past catastrophe have been preserved to this day. During the meteorite's explosion, new minerals — impactites — were formed. In the southeastern side of the crater one can find concealed glass splashes and glassy formations up to four centimetres long. These black formations look as if they have just been in an over heated furnace.

religion, rationalism is not a finished product a cut and dried system with its unalterable dogmas, tenets, and rituals. It is a process by which understanding deepens and man can time and again, eliminate errors in his thinking and at every step arrive nearer the truth."

Rationalism is therefore forward-looking and dynamic, not backward-looking and immutable like religion. The morality it inspires is this-worldly in its application, not other-worldly. It derives from a present reality and not a nebulous hereafter.

As Bazaz sees it the moral crisis that afflicts the world today is from the confrontation between obscurantism and rational knowledge. Within this context the question that most concerns us is "Whither Indian Society?"

As in Christianity in the west, so in India rationalist thought posed a strong threat to the dominant Hindu religion. In Buddhism and Jainism. But Brahminism reasserted itself through a process of assimilation. By the time the British took India society abounded in countless abominable social evils. But Western liberalism inspired right-minded Hindu and Muslim reformers of the late 19th century to eradicate many of these evils. With the rise of nationalism, however, Indians reverted to orthodox and anachronistic moral beliefs. The nationalist movement was essentially religious in its inspiration and resulted in the trauma of Partition.

"India is at the cross roads of her history," writes the author. "The impact of Western culture fostered appreciation of science and technology in the people. But their thinking has not yet advanced beyond the state that obtained in the fourteenth century."

Karma, fatalism and the dubious promise of better things in another life account for a lack of self-confidence and self-reliance. Traditionalists talk of a return to ancient beginnings to find one's bearings. But modern living and medieval thinking are totally incompatible. Clearly salvation lies in following the path of modernity, scientific knowledge, reason and secular morality.

The present moral crisis in India stems from a cynical practice of hypocrisy at a national level. The very principle of 'secularism' is false. It ascribes equal validity and correctness to widely conflicting religions, and recognises all as the truth. Where ritual and religiosity replace sterling moral character and social commitment, each man becomes a law unto himself. Corruption, greed and selfishness flourish. Ancient anachronistic moral laws cannot fill the present vacuum.

The solution according to Prem Nath Bazaz is to liberate Indian thinking by early infusing young minds with the concept of secular morality and a social philosophy based on reason. "The more a man's behaviour and actions are influenced by reason, the nearer he is to goodness." He foresees the inevitable withering away of all those religious beliefs in the world which cannot stand up to scientific scrutiny. Only then will the current moral crisis be solved and the world look forward to an era of peace.

"Rejection of an obsolete code is no declaration of war against morality. There can be and should be no moral anarchy; only the out-moded, anachronistic laws and customs have to be thrown out, making room for new ones suited to the requirements of the changes that have occurred in the individual's or the society's life." Only secular morality fulfills these conditions. △

—Ms. M.R. Bhatt

BISMILLAH

(The following is an unedited full text of a letter dated 29-5-1979 written by Mr. F. Alladian, a subscriber of FREE-TGHOU from Hyderabad (A.P.) to Hazret Mian Nasir Ahmed, the Head of Ahmadiyya Community at Rabwah, Pakistan-Ed.)

My most respected and Beloved Mian Sahib and the son of a most Brilliant Brain. May peace and Blessing of Almighty shower his constant blessing always are the sincerest prayers from the bottom of our hearts. Amen I enclose herewith in 'ORIGINAL' a letter I have received from Mr. A Suryanarayana, the General Secretary of Indian Rationalist Association of Madras-28/18 Pantheon Road Madras-600-008 for your valued consideration.

You have already received a challenge and in response to it you had accepted it and invited Dr. Kovoov to stay in Rabwah for six months at Jamaat's Expenditure and perhaps you might be aware that Dr. Kovoov was suffering from cancer of the bladder and used to pass frequently. He was bed ridden and was absolutely unfit to take up the long and tedious journey to Rabwah and soon after he died of heart failure. Thus the challenge thrown by him was extinguished with his life

Now Mr. A. Suryanarayana has stepped into his shoes with the same terms and conditions.

Please be good to reply him directly with a copy of your letter to me. You need not send any correspondence to Qudian in this connection as they know nothing about it and the entire responsibility on your head as you are the only claimant of a "LIVING GOD" in the "WHOLE WORLD"

For your information, you have two choices either to shon him Miracles of God Almighty at Rabwah or Procliam any future event of any nature of short term under one year which will be widely publicised in all the leading papers of the WHOLE WORLD in different languages, so that it could be a real proof of God's power Invested in your person by God himself as mentioned in Several "KUTBAS" (Sermons).

I have every hope and belivefirmly that if there be an intelligent God, he would surely accept this challenge and show his Power to the thirsty who offers rewards to know him. Holy Quran says he who goes one foot towards him, God rushes ten times more faster to him. On this principle you would shake up heaven and earth and open their eyes.

May God almighty give you courage of steel and power to draw such doubting Thomas at your feet.

I am dead sure your goodself will not backout under any circumstances. The very purpose of your life is to bring God before the forgotten nation.

With this prayers I close my letter.

Yours Obediently

F. ALLADIN,

Requesting your kind prayers every moment.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

On Gods and Godmen

—Master Yash V. Lokhandwala

(Reproduced from 'Saraswati' Magazine, February 1979 of Jai Hind College, Bombay).

God is a myth, immortality an illusion; religion a gigantic fraud!

To a believer, this statement would be shocking, absurd, irrational — take your pick; the agnostic would take it with a pinch of salt; a member of a genus of the rare species classed under the much-abused word 'atheist' would digest it with a grunt of satisfaction.

To understand the concept of god and religion (godmen) being illegitimate offsprings of the latter, one first has to realise how gods were 'born' — certainly not the products of a frenzied coitus or a successful case of artificial insemination! Take a look at the word 'god-fearing' — does it ring a bell? It is not vaguely possible — quite possible — plausible — true! — that gods were created out of FEAR in the minds of our ancestors — fear of the elements of nature like the sun, rain, storms and fire? The religious Greek philosopher Statius had proclaimed — 'It was fear that first made god in this world'.

So much for the origin. Now let's consider the properties and uses of the so-called, all-pervading gods. They are considered to be fountains of peace, abodes of spirituality who radiate love and attract faith — vague terminology that can be summed up in the words: 'a load of hogwash'!

The concept of god was very useful in three ways: It made it possible to answer any challenging query by calling it "god's

will" and "god's creation"; to create a sanction for moral conduct in the form of 'hope of heaven' and 'fear of hell' and lastly to provide themes for dancing, painting sculpture and other fine arts. In spite of its usefulness, this concept of god and religion, having been created on abstract grounds, is a fraud. Therefore, like all other frauds, it should be exposed and thrown to the winds. Not only will this satisfy our conscience, but it will definitely free humanity from the vice-like clutches of mentally deranged, money-hungry godmen and charlatans.

As regards the 'fraudmen' who are out to cheat the people for monetary gains, much has been said and written about them and almost all their tricks of the trade have been revealed. The magical appearance of 'holy ash', 'Selko' watches and other articles is due to mere sleight of hand. If these self-styled 'bhagwans' really possess divine powers, why don't they try producing some big object like a pumpkin which can't be hidden in long flowing robes?

When it is obvious that our 'miracle-men' are only skilful magicians, the million-dollar question is — why do they still have such a large following? Isn't it a crying shame that even highly qualified 'scientists' support them on a totally unscientific basis? After seeing such educated and supposedly 'sensible' people behaving so 'irrationally', one can't really blame the common man.

Finally a word about those godmen who themselves have been 'indoctrinated' by their ancestors and are now brainwashing the masses. 'Let us forgive them for they know not what they speak'.

One can only hope that the government will recognise the potential threat that the presence of these godmen poses to the nation. We certainly don't want a repeat performance of what happened to the People's Temple cult in Guyana. △

Test for Reason No. 22

THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE

Little Meena was not convinced when her teacher said that the hare would finally overtake the tortoise.

"You said that the tortoise was a thousand metres ahead," said Meena.

"Yes," replied the teacher, "but the hare runs ten times as fast as the tortoise."

"That makes little difference, Sir; by the time the hare covers those thousand metres, the tortoise would have gone ahead by a hundred."

"That's right."

"While the hare is over with this hundred, the tortoise would have covered ten metres more. When the hare makes up these ten, the tortoise would have managed another metre. By the time the hare covers this one whole metre the tortoise would be leading by one-tenth of a metre. And while the hare is still at it, the tortoise covers another one-hundredth, and so on. I agree that the lead is diminishing and if you carry on, it may reduce to one-millionth of a metre or even less but the hare will always be lagging behind."

"No, Meena, that can't be right as by the time the hare covers two thousand metres, the tortoise covers just two hundred and would thus be eight hundred metres behind."

"Well, Sir, let's not jump to conclusions. I have just explained to you the way I look at the problem and..."

"But that's not the right approach to the problem," interrupted the teacher."

"How do you say that your approach is right and mine is not?"

Any comments?

RULES:

1. The entries should be received on or before 15-7-79.

2. There is a prize of books worth Rs. 10 to be sent to the winner. If there is more than one correct entry the prize will be divided equally.

3. Readers are requested to quote their Membership Number or subscription no.

SOLUTION FOR TEST FOR REASON No. 20.

Since totally 30 inmates are married (clue 1) and 15 of them are married sewaks (clue 6), the married Sevikas are 15. Since the total number of Sevikas is 30 (clue 1), the unmarried Sevikas are also 15 in number.

The total number of sevikas above 25 years of age is 24 — 12 — 12 (clues 2 and 5). According to clue 4, the number of married



WHO IS GUILTY

A Ganga in Patna abducted school children and supplied them at Rs. 20/- a night to people in high places. One boy recovered by the police, took them to a hide-out where the raiding party found a constable "making love" to two minors. The boys were taken into custody, while the amorous constable was let off.

— (INDIA TODAY)



Sevikas who are above 25 years of age is also 12 (19 — 7). Thus there is no unmarried Sevika who is more than 25 years of age.

The following who have sent correct answers share the prize :

1. Dr. J.C.B. Abraham, Madurai.
2. Mr. R. Achyuta, Hanumankonda.
3. Mr. Chandran, Baroda.
4. Mr. A. Jayasheela, Andar.
5. Mr. R. Lakshminarayanan, Bangalore.
6. Ms. P. Meenakumari, Madurai.
7. Mr. V. Murugappan, Madras.
8. Mr. B. Padmanabhan, Madras.
9. Mr. G. Pandian, Madras.
10. Mr. G. Pushkaran, Shillong.
11. Mr. S. Thirugnanasambandan, Madras.

SOLUTION FOR TEST FOR REASON No. 21.

In 40 days the pasture provides 1600 feeds and in 60 days 1800 feeds. Thus 20 days growth on the pasture allows for 200 extra feeds or, alternatively, enough grass grows every day to feed 10 cows. Consequently, the quantity of grass on the pasture before the cows start grazing is enough for (1600 — 40 x 10) or (1800 — 60 x 10) i.e. 1200 feeds.

We have already seen that the daily growth is adequate to feed 10 cows endlessly. So, out of 20 cows the remaining 10 would take 120 days to consume the 1200 feeds that already exist on the pasture. Hence, the pasture would last 120 days if 20 cows were to graze on it.

The following who have sent correct answers share the prize :

1. Mr. Chandran, Baroda.
2. Mr. R. Lakshminarayanan, Bangalore.
3. Mr. G. R. Menon, Ahmedabad.

Continued from page No. 201

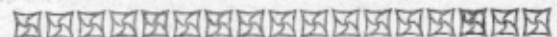
them. He explained that today's youth are poisoned by the total system of education.

On the spot questions raised by various members were convincingly answered by the I.R.A. president while Prof. Pathak answered the questions raised by Mr. D.V. Vaswani.

The Baroda Rationalist Association was formally inaugurated by the President of I.R.A. and a Managing Committee consisting of six members was unanimously elected as follows :—

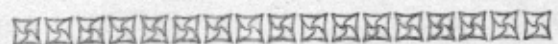
1. Mr. C. Sadanandan (Convenor)
2. Mr. P. P. Shah
3. Mr. C. Bhaskaran
4. Mr. C. Chandran
5. Mr. K.M. Parushothaman
6. Mr. Sanat O Mehta

The Meeting concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. K. M. Purushothaman.



HOW OLD IS THE WHEEL ?

Nobody knows and most likely we will never know the name of the person who invented the wheel. But even so, it might be possible to date the invention. Archaeologists found the oldest wheeled carriage in the world in Mesopotamia — it is 5,500 years old. And recently, Soviet Archaeologists unearthed fragments of a wooden wheel in the Crimea, which is at least 4,500 years old. The expedition led by V. Korpuseva has found several other wheels belonging to different epochs.



An Acknowledgement and An Appeal

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations for FREETHOUGHT:

DURING MARCH 1979 :

Mr. V. Venkateswara Rao, Tuni	5 50
Mr. E. Prasada Rao, Madanapalle	7 00
Mr. C. R. Janardhanan, Bangalore	10 00
Mr. T. R. Gangadharan, Avadi	10 00
A well wisher from Madras	50 00
Less than Rs. 5 each	4 25

As per March 79 issue	86 75
	1,484 80

Total for the year 1978-79	1,571 55
----------------------------	----------

DURING APRIL AND MAY 1979 :

Mr. P. V. Prakash, Madras	10 00
Mr. S. Nancharajah, Mandavalli	20 00
A Well wisher from Madras	100 00
Mr. Panchatcharam, Madras	10 00
Mr. S. Krishnan, Bombay	160 00
Mr. Gurajala Seetharamaiah, Tenali	25 00
Mr. P. Ravikumar, Vijayawada	6 00
Less than Rs. 5/- each	10 25

341 25

Other Members and well-wishes are earnestly requested to rush their generous donations

Ms. S. V. VASUNDHRA,
Treasurer, I.R.A.

New Members

We heartily welcome the following New Members to I.R.A. :

Membership No.	Name	Place
LIFE MEMBERS :		
LM-61	△ Mr. Justice R. A. Jahagirdar	Bombay (Maharashtra)
LMF-5	Mr. C. Doraiswamy	Chicago (U.S.A.)
ORDINARY MEMBERS :		
M-496	Mr. C. V. K. Nair, B.Com.,	Alleppey (Kerala)
M-497	Mr. D. Srinivasan, B.A.	Madras (Tamilnadu)
M-498	Mr. B. K. Vittal, B.A.	Madras (Tamilnadu)
STUDENT MEMBERS :		
SM-62	Mr. P. Ravi Kumar	Vijayawada (A.P.)
SM-63	Mr. P. Suresh	Neyyeli (Tamilnadu)
	△ Converted from ordinary membership.	

A. SURYANARAYANA,
General Secretary, I. R. A.

Guru-Sishya No. 7.

By S. V. GANESAN



SEXOLOGY FOR SELF—MYTHOLOGY FOR OTHERS.

Next Issue . . .

Special Number on Children*Containing Special Articles from your favourite authors . . .*

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD

—Mr. Y. A. Lokhandwala, Bombay

SIX GIFTS FOR YOUR CHILDREN

—Ms. Margaret R. Bhatti, Bombay

CATCH THEM YOUNG

—Mr. R. Lakshminarayanan, Bangalore

A SURVEY OF CHILDREN'S CONCEPT OF
GOD AND RELIGION

—Mr. A. Harnath, Madras

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. PREM NATH BAZAZ

—Mr. C. A. Seshadri, Madras

Also Short Stories and other regular features
with emphasis on Children